

**Delta Stewardship Council
Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee
BACKGROUND**

Authority:

In 2009, California's elected leadership approved a package of bills designed to address statewide issues of water supply reliability and a restored Delta ecosystem. Commonly referred to as the "coequal goals", new policy was set for water management in California. This legislation created the Delta Stewardship Council (Council) and directed the Council to adopt and implement a comprehensive, sustainable management plan to further the coequal goals. That plan was unanimously adopted by the Council in May of 2013.

A primary responsibility of the Council is to help coordinate the activities of hundreds of local, state and federal agencies that have responsibilities directly related to water, ecosystem and the Delta. Pursuant to Water Code Section 85204, the Council "*shall establish and oversee a committee of agencies responsible for implementing the Delta Plan. Each agency shall coordinate its actions pursuant to the Delta Plan with the Council and other relevant agencies.*" This includes fostering engagement, cooperation and coordination with the federal agencies with responsibilities in the Delta and regarding implementation of the Delta Plan. (Water Code Section 85082)

California Water Action Plan Nexus:

The California Water Action Plan, as jointly released by the Secretaries of the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), on behalf of the Administration, emphasizes the critical juncture for water policy in California and declares that "working together and continued collaboration is essential". It identifies key actions that address urgent needs and provide the foundation for sustainable management of California's water resources, including achieving the coequal goals for the Delta by implementing the Delta Plan. Specifically, "*the Administration directs all of its relevant agencies to fully participate in the Implementation Committee established by the Delta Stewardship Council*".

The Delta Plan is the state's plan for the Delta and there is extensive interconnectedness with the statewide California Water Action Plan. Where efforts may be better coordinated and actions streamlined in pursuit of implementation, the Council recommends using the statutorily-required Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee as the forum to serve this function.

Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee

On December 19, 2013, the Council identified a core group of state and federal agencies to compose the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee

(Committee) as dictated by the specific matter or subject area in the Delta Plan. (Attachment 1) These agencies have been determined by the Council as vital to successful implementation based on their Lead and Supporting Agency status within the Delta Plan, responsibility for multiple areas of the Plan, and ability to provide leadership, resources, staff and funding for collaborative implementation efforts. This includes specific federal agencies with relevant interests in the Delta (and responsibilities under the Delta Plan) whose participation on the Committee will continue the essential state-federal partnership so critical to lasting success. Each implementing member agency shall be represented by the highest level of authority to formally speak on behalf of the agency at a policy and management level.

The Council also adopted a charge to the Committee as a framework to guide the member agencies in designing a structure that will best serve their needs within this venue. (Attachment 2) This is intended to be a forum for capturing and communicating the range of views, approaches and priorities of the implementing agencies while being committed to facilitating achievement of the coequal goals. The Delta Plan states that this Committee will convene twice a year, or more if necessary. All formal Committee meetings will be noticed and open to the public.

Inaugural Meeting April 9, 2014: The inaugural Committee meeting offers the first opportunity for all member agencies to mutually develop the guiding principles and mechanisms necessary to support interagency collaboration through this construct. At this time, the Committee is not designed as a voting body, but is intended to foster discussion and interagency involvement with planning, programs, policy and regulation development as it relates to Delta Plan implementation.

On an as-needed basis, the Committee may designate interagency work groups to target a series of Delta issues and barriers to progress not currently addressed in other forums. Through the alignment of priorities, Council staff will work with implementing agency staff to further develop the working group design and move forward with related activities as determined by the Committee.